

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Mikael BLOMQVIST et al.

Group Art Unit: 1771

Application No.: 10/516,731

Examiner: M. MATZEK

Filed: March 11, 2005

Docket No.: 121925

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MAKING PLATE-LIKE FIBER-REINFORCED
PRODUCTS

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the November 1, 2006 Restriction Requirement, Applicants provisionally elects Group 1, claims 1-11, with traverse.

The Patent Office alleges that Groups 1-3 do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because Groups 1-3 allegedly lack the same or corresponding special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2. Specifically, the Patent Office alleges that the alleged special technical feature of a plate like fiber reinforced composite product comprising fibers forming a three dimensional cohesive mat, wherein the fibers are surrounded by a binding agent, is known in the art. The Patent Office alleges that U.S. Patent No. 3,860,371 ("Willy") allegedly teaches this indicated special technical feature. Applicants disagree with these allegations.

Applicants submit that the special technical feature shared by claims 1 and 17 is that the fibers bound together in the three dimensional cohesive fiber mat have a thickness mainly

ranging between 0.5 and 0.8 mm, and that at least 80% of the fibers have a length of at least 100 mm, the special technical feature shared by claims 1 and 12 is that a mixture comprising fibers is placed under a pressure of at least 0.8 bar in order to allow the mixture to harden into a hardened plate-like product, and the shared technical feature shared by all of independent claims 1, 12 and 17 is that the plate like fiber reinforced composite stable product has a thickness of 10 mm to 150 mm. The special technical feature(s) shared by the present claims is/are not the broad special technical feature alleged by the Patent Office.

Applicants submit that Willy does not teach or suggest that the fibers bound together in the three dimensional cohesive fiber mat have a thickness mainly ranging between 0.5 and 0.8 mm, and that at least 80% of the fibers have a length of at least 100 mm, as recited in both method claim 1 and product claim 17. As such, Applicants submit that at least claims 1 and 17 share a special technical feature within the meaning of PCT Rule 13.2 not taught by Willy.

Further, claims 1 and 12 bear a common special technical feature in that a mixture comprising fibers is placed under a pressure of at least 0.8 bar in order to allow the mixture to harden into a hardened plate-like product. As with the special technical feature shared by claims 1 and 17, claims 1 and 12 also share a common technical feature not taught or suggested by Willy.

Moreover, all of independent claims 1, 12 and 17 share a special technical feature in that each of the claims recites that the plate like fiber reinforced composite stable product has a thickness of 10 mm to 150 mm.

Applicants submit that Willy does not teach or suggest any of the aforementioned special technical features recited in the present claims. The broad statement presented by the Patent Office as allegedly being the special technical feature is clearly does not correctly summarize the special technical features recited in claims 1, 12 and 17. Thus, Applicants

submit that all of Groups 1-3 relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because they each share a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2.

It is also respectfully submitted that the subject matter of all claims 1-19 is sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one Group of claims would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining claims. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803 in which it is stated that "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office.

Thus, withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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